

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION VO-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 2058

ROME FOR INS DIRECTOR FALCHER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CVIS, SHUM, PINT, PERP, CZ
SUBJECT: POSSIBILITY OF THIRD COUNTRY PROCESSING (TCP)
IN PRAGUE

1. INCREASINGLY, WESTERN EMBASSIES IN PRAGUE ARE BEING CONFRONTED WITH THE PROBLEM OF APPLICANTS FOR EMIGRATION WHO, BECAUSE OF THEIR APPLICATIONS, HAVE BEEN STRIPPED OF THEIR CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENSHIP AND ISSUED STATELESS PERSONS' DOCUMENTATION. THIS DOCUMENTATION TAKES THE FORM OF A CARTE D'IDENTITE DE VOYAGE VALID FOR A LIMITED PERIOD AND ENDORSED FOR EMIGRATION TO ONE OR MORE WESTERN COUNTRIES, SOMETIMES THE UNITED STATES. SUCH PERSONS OFTEN EITHER ARE INELIGIBLE FOR WESTERN IMMIGRANT VISAS OR MAY OBTAIN THEM ONLY WITH CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY, BEING, FOR U.S. PURPOSES, ELIGIBLE ONLY FOR APPLICATION AS NON-PREFERENCE IMMIGRANTS.

2. TYPICALLY, A PERSON STRIPPED OF HIS CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENSHIP LOSES HIS JOB AND MAY HAVE EXTREME DIFFICULTY PROCURING HOUSING AND SUPPORT FOR HIMSELF AND HIS DEPENDENTS. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE SPOKEN AT LENGTH WITH ONLY THREE SUCH APPLICANTS, WE FEEL THAT THEY MIGHT READILY QUALIFY AS REFUGEES UNDER EXISTING STANDARDS (SECTION 203(A) (7) OF THE INA.)

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3. WE ARE CONCERNED ALSO THAT THE CZECHOSLOVAK REGIME MIGHT FIND GRIST FOR ITS PROPAGANDA MILL IN CONTINUED REFUSAL OF VISAS TO SUCH PERSONS, WHO HAVE AT CONSIDERABLE RISK TO THEMSELVES AND THEIR FAMILIES APPLIED TO MOVE TO THE UNITED STATES OR SOME OTHER COUNTRY.

4. WE ARE THUS INTERESTED IN LEARNING WHETHER ANY POSSIBILITY MAY EXIST OF EXTENDING THE THIRD COUNTRY PROCESSING PROGRAM NOW IN USE IN THE SOVIET UNION AND ROMANIA TO PRAGUE. WE WOULD ANTICIPATE NO MORE THAN TEN CASES A YEAR AND REALIZE THAT THIS WOULD BE AN ALMOST INCONSEQUENTIAL NUMBER WHEN COMPARED WITH THE VOLUME OF CASES HANDLED BY MOSCOW AND BUCHAREST. STILL, THE POSSESSION OF AN ALTERNATIVE TO OUTRIGHT DENIAL WOULD BE HIGHLY BENEFICIAL TO US.

5. GIVEN THE PRIVATIONS TO WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED, SIGNERS OF CHARTER 77, THE CZECHOSLOVAK CIVIL RIGHTS MANIFESTO, ARE BEGINNING TO SEEK PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE TO WESTERN AND NEUTRAL COUNTRIES. HAVING BEEN DEPRIVED OF THEIR JOBS AND FORCED TO SELL PERSONAL PROPERTY TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES, SOME CHARTISTS ARE FINDING LIFE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA. SOME HAVE RECEIVED HINTS THAT THEIR AND THEIR FAMILIES' PERMANENT DEPARTURE FROM THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE LOOKED UPON WITH FAVOR. IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH PERSONS SHOULD APPLY TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES, WE WOULD AT PRESENT BE VIRTUALLY UNABLE TO ASSIST THEM. THIS, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR EMBARRASSMENT MENTIONED IN PARA 3, WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE CONSONANT WITH THE IMAGE THE US HAS SOUGHT TO PROJECT SINCE SIGNING OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

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6. WE WOULD THUS VERY MUCH APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S AND INS' ASSESSMENT OF THE SUITABILITY OF THE TCP PROGRAM FOR OUR NEEDS. AS WE HAVE NO EXPERIENCE WITH THE PROGRAM'S WORKINGS, WE WOULD ALSO VERY MUCH APPRECIATE GUIDANCE AS TO HOW TO PROCESS SUCH CASES, SHOULD WE BE EMPOWERED TO DO SO.
BYRNE

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NNN

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